UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/CN.10/PV.165
29 April 1992

ENGLISH

DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-FIFTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 21 April 1992, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. ERDOS (Hungary)

- General exchange of views (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS (continued)

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to begin with a very simple statement: the later we begin, the later we finish. There are 12 speakers on the list for this morning.

Mr. PATOKALLIO (Finland): Much has again changed in the world since the Disarmament Commission last met. Prospects for arms control and disarmament, through unilateral as well as agreed measures, have further improved. That the change has been accompanied by new uncertainties is worrisome. Yet Finland, for one, prefers the new uncertainties to the old certitudes.

The delegation of Finland warmly welcomes our close neighbours, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, as new members of this Commission. We look forward to their constructive input to our deliberations. The same naturally applies to the other new members in our midst.

Congratulations are also due to you, Mr. Chairman. We are convinced that under your experienced leadership the Commission will demonstrate that reform was indeed worth while.

"The proof of the pudding is in the eating", as our Anglo-Saxon friends so wisely remind us. This year the Commission begins to eat its reformed pudding. Without trying to carry the analogy too far, it is clear, at least to my delegation, that the taste of the whole pudding will be largely determined by what happens to item 4 on our agenda, "Objective information on military matters".

(Mr. Patokallio, Finland)

In our view, Working Group I has a good basis for its work in the paper prepared by you, Mr. Chairman, in your previous Disarmament Commission capacity. What we need now is a determined effort to seek consensus on practical guidelines and concrete recommendations in this field.

Increased openness and transparency in military matters are of cardinal importance. They contribute to increased confidence and security in international relations. The more openness becomes an integral part of defence policies and procurement throughout the world, the more credible disarmament policies and commitments become, both internationally and internally.

Let me emphasize this last point. Objective information - timely, accurate and comprehensive information - on military matters should be made routinely available to the public in all States, in all regions. All States should inform their citizens not only of what others are doing, but of what they themselves are up to. Credibility begins at home.

Not everything needs to be, or should be, made public, for reasons of national security. But surely openness should be the rule, secretiveness the exception, and not the other way round. A practical guideline from this Commission establishing openness as the norm would constitute real progress.

Openness, in our view, is also a key ingredient in our other discussions, on regional disarmament as well as on the role of science and technology, in particular. The chances for advance in both of these areas depend largely on the availability of objective information on what States do or plan to do.

The decision to set up the United Nations Register for arms transfers was an important step forward. We hope that all States will choose to utilize this new instrument of global military transparency right from the beginning.

(Mr. Patokallio, Finland)

As far as concrete recommendations by the Disarmament Commission to the United Nations are concerned, let me point out one practical step the Commission should endorse: international confidence would be greatly enhanced if more States were to utilize the standardized United Nations reporting instrument on military expenditures. The reporting instrument could be further improved by making it more forward looking. States would report not only past spending but future projections, say in terms of the next fiscal year. This practice has already been adopted in Europe, within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE).

Regional disarmament is a subject to which the delegation of Finland attaches a great deal of importance. Naturally, our starting point is Europe and what was possible there even amid tension, commonly known as the cold war.

We note with satisfaction that efforts to enhance regional security have made headway recently, in Latin America as well as North-East Asia.

The relationship between global and regional security is, and should be seen as, a straightforward one: it is complementary. No learned exegesis of the relative merits and demerits of regional and global approaches is required. Both are needed. Common sense tells us which approach fits which issue better. What is truly required - and the European experience bears this out - is a positive attitude towards regional disarmament and the will to seize every opportunity. Listing preconditions and lamenting obstacles, however real, only perpetuates the status quo - a condition which the same speakers often find equally wanting.

Unfortunately, past discussions and the Chairman's paper from Working Group III last year show that the concept of global security can be invoked in a manner which would effectively preclude any regional efforts. If, for

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example, full realization of expectations for global nuclear disarmament are seen as a precondition for any regional conventional disarmament, little can indeed be expected. Too many things should not be tied together. The result will not be linkage: it will be immobility.

There is, again, a need for practical guidelines. Some of these guidelines are self-evident. It is self-evident that any regional approach to disarmament has to take into account the specific conditions and characteristics of the region concerned. It cannot be otherwise.

More operative guidelines are needed. My delegation would stress two of them. First, openness and transparency in military matters are an essential element of regional disarmament efforts as well. An attitude of openness can help States to understand better the security concerns of the others in the region. Secondly, confidence-building measures are a tested means to give organized effect and expression to openness and transparency in the context of regional security. Confidence-building measures are not marginal or collateral to actual disarmament. Properly conceived and implemented, they pave the way to disarmament. The CSCE process provides ample proof of that.

Let me now turn to the subject of science and technology.

When we assess the role science and technology may have in the context of international security, one conclusion is inescapable: science and technology as such are completely neutral. What may not be neutral is the use to which they are put. And use is determined by intent and concomitant political decisions. Here again we are faced with the need to increase openness. The key to unlocking the problem does not lie in monitoring each and every scientific development for potential nefarious uses. It lies in increasing

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openness, transparency and predictability of intentions, policies, doctrines and practices in the field of military security.

Scientific and technological developments have an important role to play in arms control and disarmament, particularly through verification. Effective verification of complex agreements depends to a large extent on sophisticated technical methods and means.

For example, Finland contributes to the use of science and technology for disarmament through training experts from developing countries in the analytical methods needed to verify the future chemical weapons convention. Similarly, the Finnish project on seismological verification of nuclear testing also contains a training element as a contribution to the verification of a future comprehensive test-ban treaty.

Prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is an issue of mounting concern, in this and other contexts. As is well known, some countries, mine included, participate in export-control regimes designed to prevent such proliferation. In our view, these regimes are not barriers to legitimate trade: they are barriers to proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

While on the subject of non-proliferation, let me add that we strongly support the proposal made yesterday by Sweden that non-proliferation be taken up as a new item on the agenda of the Commission.

Finally, a few words about nuclear disarmament.

Profound changes in the international situation have clearly diminished the role of nuclear weapons in the security equation. Indeed, the key issues connected with nuclear disarmament have changed. Only a few years ago the most pressing problem was to halt the accumulation of ever-greater numbers of

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ever-deadlier weapons. The Final Document of 1978 illustrates this preoccupation perfectly. Today the most acute problem is to implement the agreements and unilateral political decisions already taken to reduce existing arsenals drastically, and to do that safely. Nuclear safety and secure control of nuclear materials are likewise sources of growing international concern.

New approaches to the discussion of nuclear disarmament in this Commission are required. To echo your apposite phrase, Mr. Chairman, it is time to break away from fossilized views - even if the fossils date no further back than 1978.

My delegation believes that Working Group II should focus on a limited number of issue areas which reflect today's concerns and on which it is realistic to expect that some progress could be made. Such areas include non-proliferation, security guarantees, confidence-building measures and nuclear-weapon-free zones as well as the relationship between nuclear weapons and international law.

Mr. TANAKA (Japan): First of all, I should like to express my hearty congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the 1992 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission. Your extraordinary diplomatic skill has become well known to the international community in the course of your illustrious career. I understand that your excellent leadership as Chairman of the Working Group on objective information on military matters greatly facilitated the work of the Group and was appreciated by every delegation last year. I am confident that under your able guidance this year's session will likewise be crowned with success. On behalf of the delegation of Japan, I pledge our full and positive support to you.

(Mr. Tanaka, Japan)

I arrived in Geneva just six days ago as the successor to Ambassador Donowaki. I must therefore ask you, Mr. Chairman, and the other representatives present today to forgive me for not having yet introduced myself to each of you individually. I look forward to doing so at the earliest opportunity. Please be assured that I shall spare no effort to promote the multilateral disarmament process. I am very much aware that in this endeavour I shall have to depend on the guidance and cooperation of my colleagues.

(Mr. Tanaka, Japan)

With the end of the cold war, and in the wake of the Gulf war and the collapse of the former Soviet Union, a new international order, founded on cooperation rather than confrontation, is taking shape, though the situation is still very much in flux. Truly extraordinary progress has been made in various fields of arms control and disarmament as a result of the easing of East-West and United States-Soviet rivalries.

Under these circumstances, the Disarmament Commission is expected to contribute to the disarmament process by conducting substantive deliberations on concrete disarmament issues, developing a common understanding among all States Members of the United Nations and submitting to the General Assembly recommendations that reflect the results of these efforts.

Our agenda has been thoroughly revised. It is my understanding that it is generally only the countries members and observers of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva that choose to speak in the Disarmament Commission forum, and that this trend has not changed in recent years. I would encourage States which are not members of the Conference on Disarmament to participate more actively in these deliberations in order to enhance the role of the Disarmament Commission.

Of the four substantive items on our agenda at this session, three are not expected to be completed this year; as for the other item, "Objective information on military matters", we are expected to submit recommendations to the General Assembly in the course of this year.

Annexed to the report of Working Group I on this item, which was adopted by the Disarmament Commission last year, was the Chairman's draft text on guidelines. This text, which is indeed your own, Mr. Chairman, reflects the active exchange of views held at last year's session. No delegation is bound by it or required to commit itself to it, but Japan considers it an important

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document on which to base our deliberations this year. We believe that various working papers submitted by delegations last year are also very useful, and we hope that the Chairman's draft text, together with these working papers, will enable us to achieve final agreement on guidelines on this subject.

Inasmuch as the general debate on this issue has already concluded, I believe it is appropriate this year that we proceed immediately to the work of drafting the guidelines in the Working Group. Therefore, I should like briefly to present Japan's position now rather than waiting to do so in the Working Group.

One of the lessons learned from the Gulf crisis is that, when tied to a country's political ambitions, the amassing of huge stockpiles of weapons through international transfers and proliferation is an element in its aggressive behaviour. Thus, in the wake of the Gulf crisis the need to strengthen efforts in the fields of international transfers of conventional weapons and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missiles has become an issue of greatest urgency.

In an effort to address this issue, Japan and other like-minded countries, including members of the European Community, having solicited the views of non-aligned countries, submitted a draft resolution calling for the establishment of a universal and non-discriminatory United Nations Register of Conventional Arms to monitor international arms transfers. That resolution, 46/36 L, was adopted last year by the General Assembly with the overwhelming support of 150 countries, and no objections.

In accordance with this resolution, the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms was established on 1 January this year, and the Panel of Governmental Experts, established by the Secretary-General, has already met

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twice to elaborate the necessary technical procedures for the effective operation of the Register and to consider how the scope of the Register might best be expanded. Furthermore, the resolution requested the Conference on Disarmament to address the question of how to enhance openness and transparency on armament issues, including military holdings and procurement, and also to address the question of openness and transparency related to the transfer of high technology with military applications and to weapons of mass destruction.

Resolution 46/36 L was adopted after long and painstaking negotiations on the text. The countries concerned demonstrated maximum flexibility in order to accommodate different views, especially those relating to the production and stockpiling of weapons, and weapons of mass destruction. The United Nations adopted this resolution in response to dramatic changes in the world order and to prevent the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms. This action was truly epoch-making.

Let me now turn to the item "Objective information on military matters", whose aim is to achieve openness and transparency not only in the field of arms transfers, but in military matters in general. This item thus goes a step beyond the resolution on transparency in armaments. Japan believes that, if nations voluntarily made available as much objective information on military matters as possible, it would contribute to reducing tensions in the regions concerned. Of course, it would be desirable to resolve at the same time related political issues, and in this sense we hope that regional and world situations will move in a direction conducive to that end.

As Ambassador Donowaki stated last year, Japan has contributed to the reduction of tensions in the Asia-Pacific region by working to enhance openness and transparency with regard to its defence capabilities. Its annual

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White Paper on national defence is particularly noteworthy. Japan is firmly committed to continuing its efforts in this area.

Moreover, as a concrete contribution in this regard, the Government of Japan has decided to host a workshop in Tokyo from 1 to 3 June this year. Complementing the work of the Panel of Governmental Experts on transparency in armaments, the workshop will discuss the role of the Register system of arms transfers as a confidence-building measure. The members of that Panel and other participants from interested countries will be invited to attend. I am confident that, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Donowaki, this workshop will elicit a meaningful exchange of views.

As for the second substantive agenda item, the item on nuclear disarmament, I believe it is fair to say that, thanks to the drastic changes that have taken place in the East-West relationship, we are now blessed with an extraordinary opportunity to promote nuclear disarmament without jeopardizing the security of the nations concerned. Accordingly, efforts should be redoubled to realize substantial and realistic reductions in nuclear arms with a view to achieving a balance of power at even lower levels of armament.

The signing of the strategic arms reduction (START) Treaty was a truly historic event. We are encouraged by a number of proposals on nuclear disarmament by the Heads of the United States and the Russian Federation which go far beyond the Treaty. Japan pays a tribute to President Bush and President Yeltsin and their respective Administrations. We sincerely hope that further concrete steps towards nuclear disarmament will be realized through negotiations between the two countries. As for the other three nuclear-weapon States, I welcome the recent decision by the French Government

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to suspend its nuclear tests until the end of this year, and I urge all three Governments sincerely to consider nuclear disarmament in response to the new situation resulting from the actions taken by the United States and the Russian Federation.

(Mr. Tanaka, Japan)

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the most important treaty for establishing a non-proliferation regime throughout the world. Japan welcomes the recent accession of a number of countries, including China, and also the decision of France to accede to it. In order further to strengthen this non-proliferation regime based on the NPT, it is necessary to ensure strict compliance with the Treaty by States Parties, and to strenghten the IAEA safeguards system and the related export control regimes.

Preventing the proliferation of biological and chemical weapons is also crucial. Japan will make every effort to contribute to the early and successful conclusion of the negotiations on the chemical weapons convention in the Conference on Disarmament. At the same time, it supports strengthening the verification system of the biological weapons Convention.

Progress in the process of destroying nuclear arms and preventing nuclear proliferation within the former Soviet Union is of vital importance to world peace and security. With the exception of the Russian Federation, all member States of the Confederation of Independent States should accede to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States. We hope that they will do so very soon. Further, in this connection, Japan has been actively participating, as an original member of the Governing Board, in the "International Science and Technology Center" project. This Center is to be established in order to prevent the outflow of Soviet scientists and engineers who possess skills and knowledge related to weapons of mass destruction, to provide them with opportunities to redirect their talents to peaceful activities and to promote the conversion process in the Russian Federation. Japan has been intensively participating in consultations with countries concerned with the aim of minimizing

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inducements to engage in activities which might lead to the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons as well as missile delivery systems. The Center will be established by Japan, the United States, the Russian Federation and the European Community. I would like to take this opportunity to appeal to all other States, as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to join in extending financial and any other support to this project. Further, the member States of the Confederation of Independent States have been strongly requested to take necessary measures with regard to controlling the export of weapons of mass destruction and related materials. For its part, Japan will continue to consider other ways in which it might extend cooperation in this respect.

In order to ensure the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missile technology, it is essential that the transfer of technologies, materials and equipment related to these weapons and to missiles be strictly controlled. Japan highly regards the existing regimes, such as those of the Australia Group and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). I recall that Argentina and Brazil submitted an interesting working paper to the United Nations Disarmament Commission last year concerning the establishment of international norms on this matter. When we discuss a proposal such as this one, it is important that we do not lose sight of the value of existing regimes or in any way disrupt their effective functioning.

As for the final item on our agenda related to regional disarmament, Japan attaches great importance to positive regional initiatives to enhance stability and confidence among nations in various regions. We particularly appreciate initiatives which pursue the non-proliferation of weapons of mass

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destruction, such as the Mendoza Agreement and the Cartagena Declaration, which were signed by a number of countries in Latin America.

In the Asian region, Japan welcomes the recent progress in the South-North dialogue in the Korean Peninsula. Yet, the issue of North Korea's nuclear development is a matter of grave concern for the security not only of that region but of the international community as a whole. We regard it a step forward to the fulfilment of North Korea's long-standing obligation under the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty that the IAEA safeguards agreement with North Korea went into force on the 10th of this month. Japan strongly hopes that North Korea will fully accept, immediately and without preconditions, the inspection of its facilities, and that the Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula will be sincerely implemented and thereby the concerns of the international community over North Korea's nuclear development will be dispelled as soon as possible.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to inform you and my other colleagues that the United Nations Secretariat will convene a disarmament conference in Hiroshima from 15 to 18 June this year. Among the subjects to be discussed will be non-proliferation and confidence-building in Asia and the Pacific. It is expected that about 60 scholars, specialists and intellectuals from Japan and abroad will participate in this, the fourth United Nations Disarmament Conference to be convened in Japan. I am confident that the conference will make a meaningful contribution to the field.

Under its Peace Constitution, Japan strictly abides by its policies of maintaining exclusively defensive forces, and of not becoming a military Power that could pose a threat to other nations. In line with these policies, Japan firmly upholds its security arrangements with the United States; abides by its

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three non-nuclear principles of not possessing, not producing, and not allowing the entry into its territory of nuclear weapons; and has kept its defense capability to the minimum required for the purposes of self-defense. Furthermore, taking into account the new international situation, my Government is at this moment carrying out a review of its mid-term defense programme. It has decided to make a budgetary cut in the programme of 100 billion yen and is considering further cuts with regard to the total programme budget. I would like to emphasize that in pursuing these basic defense policies, together with its policies of openness on defense information and of strictly controlling arms exports, Japan is making a vital contribution to greater regional stability and to world peace and security.

The CHAIRMAN: Before calling on the next speaker, Ambassador Azikiwe, of Nigeria, I should like, on behalf of all our colleagues, to thank him very much for his cooperation in agreeing to assume the chairmanship of Working Group IV on science and technology.

Mr. AZIKIWE (Nigeria): Mr. Chairman, the delegation of Nigeria wishes to congratulate you on your well-deserved election. Your election is a reflection of the confidence we have in your diplomatic skills, particularly in the field of disarmament. We have no doubt that under your wise guidance, the deliberations of this session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission will come to a fruitful conclusion.

It is also appropriate to congratulate other members of the bureau with whom Nigeria in the past has collaborated to promote the cause of disarmament and peace. We are certain that they will cooperate with you, Sir, to advance further the work of the Commission in this unique and challenging time.

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

The world is at a historical point. The structure of the international system has radically changed. No longer is the world divided by ideology. No longer is there a seemingly endless competition for superiority in armaments that threatens international peace and security. Indeed, the cold war is over and the world, at the systemic level, is more secure as East-West rivalry has given way to cooperation.

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

Though the threat of global conflagration has receded, regional and national conflicts still flare uncontrollably. There are still problems yet to be tackled successfully to ensure peace at the global level, security at the regional level and harmony at the national level. What the current environment has offered is a challenge and respite truly to reshape history, to build peace, to raise hope and to reduce insecurity at all levels.

The Disarmament Commission, reflecting the changes in international relations, reformed its working methods two years ago. This year, as in 1991, the Commission will again confront weighty and urgent issues of disarmament and international security.

In our discussion last year on the item "Objective information on military matters", much was achieved, and the framework of guidelines for transparency in providing information on military matters is now appearing to take shape. The provision of such information enhances confidence-building among Member States. Whilst all States have the duty to disclose information about their military expenditures and holdings, the greater responsibility falls on developed countries, dominant as they are in armaments and arms production, and whose actions are decisive in matters of international security.

The 1992 session will be the last in which this item will be discussed. That being the case, we should work energetically to evolve acceptable guidelines on objective information on military matters for submission to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

Nuclear disarmament still remains the most important item in various disarmament forums. The existence of nuclear weapons poses the greatest threat to mankind. By their lethality and devastating effects, the use of

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nuclear weapons can end civilization. Despite their awesome nature, little has been achieved in terms of ending their possession or indeed restricting the proliferation of these weapons of mass destruction.

Regrettably, progress on this vital issue has eluded the international community. Despite the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, START and the recent unilateral initiatives by the United States and Russia, the current global total of nuclear warheads is still in excess of 50,000. The qualitative aspect of the nuclear arms race also continues unabated. New generations of nuclear weapons are rapidly being developed.

Genuine international peace and security cannot be built on the possession of nuclear weapons. In a world devoid of ideological rivalry, the doctrine of nuclear deterrence has become outdated and irrelevant. The time has now come for a new security structure, based on the collective survival of mankind.

Recent events in Europe have once again reminded us of the risks involved in the proliferation of nuclear weapons. In 1968, when the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was signed, there were only five nuclear-weapon States. The emergence of new States in that region has increased the number of nuclear-weapon States. The safety of the nuclear warheads scattered over those new States is a matter of serious concern to us. Indeed, my delegation is deeply concerned that these weapons of mass destruction could fall into the wrong hands. Recent reports of illegal trading in uranium and losses of nuclear fissile materials are alarming; thus, there is a need for urgent measures towards nuclear disarmament.

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

We note with satisfaction the accession of China and France to the NPT, but we remain concerned by the contradiction between the demand that there should be no proliferation of nuclear weapons and the simultaneous, glaring disregard of calls to halt all nuclear tests. We must begin the vital dialogue that will bring an end to the production of fissile materials for weapons purposes.

Nigeria is traditionally known for its campaign to make Africa a nuclear-weapon-free zone. That goal, which was elusive a few years ago, is now within reach with South Africa's signing of the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards agreement. However, we expect regular inspection of South African nuclear facilities and call on the international community to join hands with Africa in attaining the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free Africa.

The item "Regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security" was discussed extensively at last year's session of the Disarmament Commission. Regional and global security complement each other. Favourable security and political conditions at the global level are important variables in the success of any regional disarmament measure.

Similarly, the equitable resolution of regional conflicts enhances global peace and security. The international community cannot claim to enjoy peace and security when some of its members are embroiled in conflicts. The rapid pace at which regional disputes can be transformed into global conflicts was illustrated by the Gulf War. Thus there is an inevitable link between regional conflicts, armaments and international security.

In addressing regional crises, the degree of global concern about a particular conflict should not depend on its perceived impact on national or

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multinational interests. The response to such conflicts must be based on enforcement of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. No dispute that triggers human tragedy of immense proportions should be considered marginal because vital interests of the strong and powerful States are not directly affected.

Regional disarmament measures should reflect the specific conditions and characteristics of each region. This is, of course, without prejudice to the possibility of adapting the experience of one region to another. However, the peculiarities of each region should be taken into account when negotiating regional disarmament agreements.

Nigeria, at the 1991 session, emphasized the importance of non-military threats to regional security and disarmament. We venture to repeat again that in addressing the issue of regional security attention must be focused on such non-military aspects as underdevelopment, deprivation of civil and political rights and ecological degradation. These also constitute threats to global security, and they should be urgently addressed.

The 20th century has indeed witnessed dramatic changes in science and technology. While humanity at the turn of the century was at the incipient stage of technological development, reliant as it was on rudimentary technology, towards the end of the century States have acquired advanced technology that could prolong life or annihilate humanity and civilization.

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

Last year, views were exchanged as to the uses to which science and technology could be put. We agreed then that science and technology could be used in the realm of disarmament for verification and compliance with assumed treaties and obligations.

Science and technology are indispensable variables in any process and stage of development. Properly applied, science and technology open new vistas of solving the many problems facing mankind. For developing countries, access to new technologies enables us to confront problems of misery and poverty.

However, science and technology have, through their application for military purposes, fueled the arms race - particularly its qualitative aspects - and made the disarmament process difficult. For years, resources which should have been used for socio-economic development have been diverted to military research and development. We must find a way of channeling these resources into more productive areas beneficial to mankind.

The latest scientific and technological developments should serve as an instrument of international cooperation, especially between the North and the South. Some of the measures taken so far on the transfer and development of technology are discriminatory in nature. We therefore appeal for a universal and non-discriminatory set of guidelines to govern the transfer and development of technology.

The challenge facing us on these four broad agenda items is clear. Last year, we had a preliminary exchange of views on the issues. This year should be used to advance the dialogue further and to start developing the framework of recommendations to the General Assembly.

Mr. HAJNOCZI (Austria): It is a particular joy and honour for me to convey to you, Sir, a personal friend, my heartfelt congratulations on your assumption of the chairmanship of the 1992 session of the Disarmament Commission. Your election to this important office reflects the wide respect your work as last year's Chairman of the Working Group on Objective Information has gained you in the multilateral disarmament community. My delegation firmly believes in your excellent capacity to steer the 1992 session of the Disarmament Commission through its second year under the reformed regime and to prepare, as you so ably did in last year's Working Group, for excellent results. In this difficult endeavour, I pledge you the full cooperation of the Austrian delegation.

I should like to take this opportunity also to express my sincere best wishes to the Rapporteur of the 1992 session of the Disarmament Commission, Mr. Bob Hiensch, and to the Chairmen of the four Working Groups.

In their opening statements during the general debate of the 1991 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission, the first one under the reformed scheme, numerous delegations expressed their optimism regarding the capacity of the new Disarmament Commission to formulate recommendations on the four items on its agenda and hence to accelerate the process of disarmament. This anticipation of substantial progress was generally based on two assessments: first, that the recent and profound changes in the international political climate would bring about a cooperative spirit, necessary for successful deliberations on the future-oriented topics; and secondly, that the reformed organizational structures of the Disarmament Commission would provide for an adequate framework to develop the required thrust to fulfil the objectives of the Disarmament Commission.

(Mr. Hajnoczi, Austria)

Consequently, the 1991 session of the Disarmament Commission, which dealt for the first time with three of the four agenda items, and for the second year with the topic of objective information, disproved remaining doubts and fulfilled most expectations. In its resolution 46/38 A, which was adopted without a vote, the General Assembly conceded that the 1991 session of the Disarmament Commission made considerable progress. Evaluating positions expressed in numerous statements, my delegation believes that further progress can be achieved. Recent developments reaffirm the continuing validity of the four agenda items under consideration.

The adoption of General Assembly resolution 46/36 L, "Transparency in armaments", by an overwhelming majority, without a single opposing vote, illustrates the universal support for the concept of objective information. It also expresses the wish of the international community for its timely operational implementation. The adoption of the open-skies Treaty, as well as other regional regimes for confidence- and security-building measures, give additional support to this assessment.

Remarkable achievements in the field of nuclear disarmament - especially the implementation of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (INF Treaty), which will, for the first time, eliminate an entire class of nuclear weapons; the signing of the long-expected START accord foreseeing a significant reduction of strategic nuclear weapons in the immediate future; and the consecutive announcements by Presidents Bush, Gorbachev and Yeltsin to eliminate many of the tactical nuclear-weapon systems - finally, after decades of stagnation - justify hopes for a sustainable nuclear-disarmament process. The accession of China and South Africa to the non-proliferation Treaty; the recent safeguards arrangements

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with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, strengthening the non-proliferation regime, as well as the recently announced French moratorium on nuclear-testing for the rest of this year, are all expected to have a positive impact on the deliberations on nuclear disarmament. We trust that, under the able leadership of its Chairman, Working Group II will be able to capitalize on these developments and succeed in introducing the newly assessed security perceptions into the discussion.

The question of a regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security has gained significant new relevance. A number of regional achievements - such as progress in the settlement of conflicts in Africa; the Mendoza Declaration in Latin America; the Declaration of Cartagena with the goal of freeing Latin America and the Caribbean from all weapons of mass destruction; the French decision to ratify Additional Protocol 1 of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe process - augur well.

Nevertheless, in the aftermath of the bi-polar global confrontation, a tragic series of regional conflicts has emerged, dramatically highlighting the interconnection between regional aspects and global structures. The devastating warfare in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Nagorny-Karabakh and Somalia illustrate the present limits of preventive diplomacy. Improved cooperative structures on a regional level, taking into consideration the interests of all countries concerned, will enhance confidence building and might ultimately secure peace.

The complex issue of the role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields has gained increased importance ever since the question was dealt with for the first time

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by the 1991 session of the Disarmament Commission. Some of its aspects are determined by developments equally affecting the other working groups. Thus the question of technologies and techniques for weapons disposal are intricately related to the reduction of nuclear warheads, as well as to the elimination of all chemical weapons after the adoption of the chemical weapons convention at present under negotiation. The cleaning-up of contaminated production- and test-sites and their surrounding areas will constitute considerable challenges.

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Working Group IV will also have to consider the role of science and technology in the field of verification of present and future agreements as well as expanded, universally adopted, safeguards in order to ensure future implementation of dual-use technologies for peaceful purposes only. Restructuring of former weapons industries and the question of conversion have to be seen in the same context as matters of development and environment.

Austria welcomes the recent establishment of the Science and Technology Centre in Moscow, which will utilize military, especially nuclear, know-how for future research for peaceful purposes, thus contributing to the process of disarmament, as well as to non-proliferation objectives.

The wording of three of the four agenda items for this year's session explicitly requires that all the topics be considered in the context of international security. In times of rapidly changing security perceptions this aspect of the mandate poses a considerable challenge to the work at the 1992 substantive session.

Since the end of the cold war the concept of international security has been undergoing profound reassessments. The narrow interpretation, focusing almost exclusively on military security, has been broadened now to include aspects of development and environment. Furthermore, its traditional defence orientation is now complemented by the concept of cooperation as an important consideration.

We still lack a coherent concept which, as the singular paper defining security interests after the Second World War, will contain an adequate security scheme for the time after the cold war. My delegation is convinced that any future security concept will have to be based on common interests and on cooperation.

(Mr. Hajnoczi, Austria)

During the 1992 substantive session deliberations in all four Working Groups can build upon a solid basis providing for possible future success.

Working Group I, on objective information on military matters, will build on the Chairman's suggested text on "Guidelines for objective information on military matters", including provisions for objectives, principles, scope and mechanisms. That Working Group will, in the forthcoming session, reach its three-year time-limit to produce recommendations and guidelines. All the national positions have been laid out, and we are now called upon to concentrate on concrete results. Thus Working Group I will produce the first set of guidelines under the reformed structure.

During the previous substantive session nuclear disarmament proved itself the most problematic item on the agenda. As the outgoing Chairman noted in his introduction of the Commission's report last year,

> "the discussions in the relevant Working Group once again oscillated around well-known positions, without taking into consideration the profound changes which had occurred in the global security balance." (A/C.1/46/PV.9, p. 8)

The positive developments since the 1991 substantive session, which have been called a dramatic escalation of unilateral nuclear disarmament measures, require an all-new approach to the discussion, freed from outdated perceptions and petrified positions. An open exchange of views on the five areas defined by one of the working papers submitted could lead to considerable progress.

In Working Group III, on a regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security, the Chairman's paper will structure this year's deliberations. Experience gained by successful regional initiatives, though adapted to allow for universal application, will facilitate progress. The intensity of last year's discussion reflected the growing importance of

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regional aspects of disarmament. This year's discussion will have to concentrate on the five topics suggested by the Chairman's paper. Work should be structured to prepare the final round of deliberations, leading to clear recommendations in all five areas in the year to come.

In Working Group IV, on the role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields, considered by a United Nations body for the first time last year, no fewer than seven working papers have been put forward to facilitate the discussion. Last year's deliberations were a brainstorming effort, trying to balance the future scope of the agenda, to clarify national considerations and to develop possible common denominators. Expanding on that substantial debate, which was summarized by the report of the Working Group, and building on the working papers, substantial efforts will be required to drive the discussion ahead.

Last year's events enhanced and redefined the arms-control and disarmament debate. The vision of hosts of experts spending futile years, not agreeing even on definitions of weapons categories and on counting modalities, has become a historical memory. The times when a stupefied public had to witness the allocation of precious resources to the multiplication of overkill capacities seem to have been overcome. The end of the cold-war period, which hampered development by freezing enormous resources in non-productive areas, coincides with a critical phase in which international security will depend not solely on the prevention of war, but on the capacity to solve at least the most pressing global problems by cooperative efforts.

(Mr. Hajnoczi, Austria)

By defining guidelines and recommendations on four agenda items which are pivotal for the acceleration of the disarmament process, this year's session will be able to contribute considerably to the future of international security.

Mr. SHAH (India): The Indian delegation would like to congratulate you warmly, Sir, on your assumption of your office. My delegation is happy to see you in the chair and is confident of your undoubted abilities to guide our deliberations forward. I also congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their election.

Let me take this opportunity to pay a warm tribute to Ambassador Peter Hohenfellner of Austria, who so ably and successfully steered the Commission's work last year.

When the Disarmament Commission adopted the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade at its 1990 session, it acknowledged by implication the failure of the efforts to translate the disarmament priorities which all members of the United Nations had set for the world in 1978, at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, into universally accepted norms, principles and processes intended to eliminate the nuclear threat. This was largely due to the era of cold-war and East-West confrontation, which is, happily, behind us. The priorities are as valid today as when they were unanimously accepted in 1978. The time is more propitious to embark on a major effort to achieve these goals.

Our common goals cannot be achieved by proposals aimed only at arms reductions, though they are certainly very welcome. The United States of America, the former Soviet Union and now the Russian Federation have announced unilateral cuts in certain categories of nuclear weapons. While these

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announcements to reduce the number of nuclear warheads are commendable, it is also essential that other nuclear-weapon States take matching positive steps in this direction. These reductions should be a stage in the process towards the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons, so necessary to establish a new world order commensurate with fresh thinking emerging in the changing world scenario.

(Mr. Shah, India)

While the world has indeed rejoiced at these policy announcements to cut nuclear weapons, to destroy or dismantle nuclear warheads, the impact would be real if there were greater transparency in regard to the implementation on the basis of these announcements. The United Nations took an important decision last year in regard to transparency in conventional armaments. Transparency in weapons of mass destruction in the form of the number of nuclear weapons dismantled or destroyed, the manner of destruction, the future programme of such destruction and the use to which the fissile material has been put would be a major contribution to nuclear disarmament. In this context let me reiterate our conviction that the fissile material from the decommissioned warheads needs to be placed under international safeguards for use exclusively for peaceful purposes.

While much has been said about the effects of the far-reaching changes in the world and their impact on global security, a crucial dimension which needs to be adequately addressed by the international community is the unresolved issues of tenuous control over some existing nuclear arsenals and the possible proliferation of existing nuclear weapons. That we have to concern ourselves with the many manifestations and implications of this danger today is largely due to the fact that the overwhelming focus of all our efforts in the nuclear field has been to prevent non-nuclear-weapon States from acquiring nuclear weapons while nuclear weapons proliferated in geometric proportions and new generations of nuclear weapons were invented and deployed by the nuclear-weapon States. Non-nuclear-weapon States such as India scrupulously adhered to a policy of nuclear non-proliferation despite having developed a nuclear technology capability and refrained from assisting any other States to develop nuclear weapons. At the same time, the competition amongst

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nuclear-weapon States to acquire more destructive capacity continued unabated. India has repeatedly urged that nuclear non-proliferation must be addressed in all its aspects if humanity is to be saved from a nuclear disaster. There is an urgent need to take into account today's reality in dealing with non-proliferation and to provide an acceptable balance of mutual responsibilities and obligations between nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States in order to eliminate the threat of nuclear weapons in a time-bound framework.

It no longer suffices to ignore reality, to emphasize it where convenient and to deny it where inconvenient, nor to continue to focus attention on horizontal proliferation of the kind which worried the world two decades ago, while ignoring the horrors of proliferation which can take place because of other realities impinging on vertical proliferation. My delegation would therefore once again urge all States Members of the United Nations to realize that the only realistic solution is to have a global and comprehensive approach to the problem. Regional arrangements, bilateral agreements, nuclear-weapon-free zones and other technical fixes, which have become popular over the last two decades, have clearly failed to arrest the qualitative or quantitative growth in the number of nuclear weapons. Nor have they succeeded in preventing an increase in the number of countries with possible control over divided nuclear arsenals. At the recent Security Council summit meeting in New York our Prime Minister shared the concern with regard to nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects but emphasized his belief that partial measures of prevention or punitive action on a selective basis would not achieve desired results. The world has acknowledged that chemical and biological weapons are a matter of universal concern to be dealt with globally. Similarly, nuclear weapons and the nuclear threat cannot be

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addressed without a global approach. What is required in the context of the present realities is a new international understanding and consensus on what constitutes non-proliferation so that the pursuit of a global approach to non-proliferation which is universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory is seriously attempted.

At this critical juncture there is a need to move away from the conceptual framework of managing the arms race to removing the source of danger through elimination. The proposals presented by India at the third special session on disarmament, in 1988, for the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction in stages, ultimately to achieve equal security for all, have become even more relevant today. The programme of action, which proposes the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction in stages, in a systematic, rational and practical time-frame, aims to achieve, in relation to nuclear weapons, what has already been initiated in the field of chemical and biological weapons. It recognizes the need for flexibility in the staging of these measures. It calls upon all States - nuclear, threshold and others - to accept equal obligations without discrimination. It provides for stage-by-stage achievement of the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

When our plan was put forward, some countries expressed difficulties in accepting these ideas in view of those countries' adherence to the doctrine of nuclear deterrence, considered a bedrock of defensive concepts in the era of East-West confrontation and the cold war. There is now no such confrontation. The cold war is over. The twentieth century has been an era riven by war and strife and missed opportunities. In its closing years now humanity has the chance fully to reshape its future. East and West, North and South must turn to building a structure of peace based not on destructive

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capabilities but on constructive economic growth. That would constitute the true victory of the cold war. Nothing should, therefore, prevent the serious consideration of this plan at the global level. We urge those who believe in the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons to make this plan workable through positive contributions. The world needs to take into account the realities of the present situation as well as technological advances in the nuclear field and to break out of the old stereotypes on non proliferation, if we are to achieve nuclear disarmament on a cooperative and realistic basis.

The present period of change and the opportunities it brings have the potential to alter the very basis of the conceptual framework of disarmament. The Russian Federation has recently reiterated that the total elimination of nuclear weapons would offer the best solution. We see greater acceptance of the need for a fundamental review of the entire military and strategic situation in the world, and consequently the revision of old military doctrines. The proposals made by Foreign Minister Kozyrev of the Russian Federation regarding non-targeting of strategic nuclear weapons, taking these weapons off their alert status and keeping delivery vehicles and warheads separate, is a move in accord with and towards our long-standing proposal for an international convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. We see progress in the thinking now articulated by many countries that all nuclear-weapon States should join the process of nuclear disarmament. Further thought needs to be given to whether the fissile material realized from the dismantling of the existing warheads will be surrendered to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) or some other agency for generation of energy for development, in order that it is not deployed in technologically more advanced nuclear weapons. It was

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apprehension on this score which prompted India to seek a freeze on the production of nuclear weapons and fissile material as early as 1982. The issue of a nuclear test ban has assumed increased importance in the present-day context. A lot of useful ground work has already been done on this issue in the Conference on Disarmament at Geneva towards reaching the stage of negotiating a nuclear test-ban treaty. We are encouraged that early conclusion of such a treaty has now been advocated not only by the Russian Federation but also by several other countries in Europe. We welcome the decision of the French Government to observe a moratorium until the end of this year on nuclear-weapon tests. Other nuclear-weapon States should respond positively to the French announcement, thereby creating a positive environment for negotiations to be undertaken on a nuclear test-ban treaty in the Conference on Disarmament. The ever-changing kaleidoscope of arguments to continue nuclear testing is now losing its lustre, and we hope that all States members of the Conference on Disarmament will soon arrive at a consensus on this issue.

In order to address the universal concern expressed at the first special session on disarmament that the qualitative aspect of the arms build-up must also receive attention, along with the quantitative aspect, India succeeded in focusing on new technologies and the qualitative arms race at the third special session on disarmament. At the last session of the Disarmament Commission India presented a working paper (A/CN.10/147) on this subject, which also suggested specific action in different fields. Backed by huge expenditure of money and resources on military research and development, new technologies which have the potential of radically transforming the methods and the nature of warfare are consistently being invented or advanced. The

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application of these technologies for military purposes would have far-reaching implications for international security and would be a major setback to efforts on disarmament. But this aspect of disarmament is unfortunately ignored, while attention is concentrated on creating and strengthening discriminatory, closed-door clubs, groups and regimes to impose unilateral restrictions on trade with developing countries in dual-use technology, equipment and materials on a discriminatory basis. The effect of such arbitrary export controls is to retard the development and economic growth of countries in need of economic development.

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No new world order which cripples growth in developing countries can endure. No security concept is complete if economic security is ignored. There is legitimate apprehension that discriminatory export control regimes are meant mainly to preserve the monopoly of a few States over weapons of mass destruction, missile technology and export markets for advanced conventional weapons. To justify this by hypothesizing potential threats from developing countries is to introduce a dangerous North-South dimension to disarmament, which should be avoided. India is therefore supportive of the ideas contained in Working Paper A/CN.10/145 presented by Argentina and Brazil at the last session of the Disarmament Commission and is also a sponsor of General Assembly resolution 46/38 D on this subject.

We encourage scientific and technological developments in the field of sensors, communications and computing capabilities which can have immensely beneficial implications for the verification of disarmament agreements and for the protection of the environment. Scientific and technological developments must be channelled decisively in favour of peaceful uses. My delegation is ready to contribute to all aspects of the tasks under Working Group IV.

At this session we will continue our consideration of the topic of regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security. As my delegation made clear during our discussions last year, we believe that the focus of United Nations efforts on disarmament, especially in the field of weapons of mass destruction, has to be multilateral and weapons specific. A regional approach to disarmament emanating from the countries of a concerned region may be considered by them as a useful contribution to global security. But other regions may find that conditions are not ripe for a regional approach, that enough trust and confidence has not been created, that many other prerequisites for a regional approach do not exist because of actions or

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omissions by one country or another. We must therefore avoid creating the impression that what is good for one region is necessarily good for another. In any case, my delegation is convinced that in the field of nuclear disarmament there is no substitute for a global approach. The latter must continue to be pursued, and indeed intensified further, if the agreed goals and priorities in the field of disarmament agreed at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament are to be realized.

It is important, therefore, to define in a clear manner, the role of regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security. Regional approach to disarmament must be based on the underlying security concerns in the region in question, where it can contribute to their alleviation. The definition of a region, in turn, has to encompass the full range of security concerns of the countries involved, as also the practicability of a specific measure of disarmament suggested in this context. The security concerns of each of the constituent States relevant to a particular disarmament approach should be fully taken into account. A regional approach to security cannot be viable in a confrontational environment.

For this purpose, appropriate confidence-building measures, guidelines for which were elaborated by the Disarmament Commission in 1988, although not disarmament measures in themselves, have a potential for contributing significantly to the enhancement of peace and security and the attainment of disarmament measures when applied in a comprehensive manner and when taking into account the specific characteristics of the region and consensus of participating States in the process as an essential prerequisite.

Building confidence through transparency and dialogue is a cornerstone of India's foreign policy. In recent months high-level political contacts between

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India and China have further advanced the bonds of friendship. We have also agreed on a number of measures to reduce tension along our borders, including regular meetings of border personnel, the establishment of communication links at border points and prior intimation regarding military exercises.

Economic, social and cultural cooperation in diverse fields under the umbrella of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) has been stepped up among the States of the Indian subcontinent. Agreements have been concluded between India and Pakistan on advance notification of military exercises, manoeuvres and troop movements, prevention of airspace violations, permitting overflights and landings of military aircraft and the setting up of hotlines between the two sides.

In anticipation of the early conclusion of a multilateral global convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons now being negotiated in Geneva, India proposed a bilateral agreement with Pakistan last year. At the last round of Foreign Secretary level talks between the two countries, it was agreed to consider issuing a joint declaration on chemical weapons and to convene a meeting of experts of the two sides to exchange views on a bilateral agreement to ban the development, production, deployment and use of chemical weapons.

An agreement between India and Pakistan on the prohibition of attacks on each other's nuclear facilities was signed in December 1988. I am happy to inform the Commission that the lists of these nuclear facilities were finally exchanged under this agreement on 1 January 1992.

Working Group I on "Objective information on military matters" made further progress in its deliberations last year. While progress towards disarmament will continue to rest on the exercise of political will of the States, a better flow of information on military matters could serve as a

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confidence-building measure and a catalyst for disarmament agreements. We believe that objective information on military matters will have its usefulness if it is so viewed, and can serve the auxiliary role of promoting concrete disarmament agreements in accordance with the agreed priorities laid down in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. If data or information on military matters is to be used in any meaningful manner for enhancing confidence, it should be comprehensive, universally complied with, available to all States on an equal footing and based on requirements in a specific context.

My delegation also sees as an evolving exercise the standardized reporting system worked out by the United Nations in the early 1980s. The reporting system and its format must be reviewed in order to include broad-based suggestions and present-day realities. The Ad Hoc Panel of Experts which developed the instrument admitted in its report that some parts of the instrument might call for a further examination. It should, for instance, be expanded to include figures of per capita military expenditure and military expenditure as a percentage of gross domestic product in order to put the figures in the proper perspective. The items to be reflected should include expenditure on all weapons of mass destruction.

My delegation will be ready to elaborate its views further on the various topics of our agenda and to cooperate with all delegations in an effort to reach common ground.

Mr. ZARIF (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, I should like to take this opportunity to offer my most sincere congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Disarmament Commission. I am confident that under your wise leadership and with your vast knowledge of disarmament issues, the Disarmament Commission will achieve significant

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results at this sensitive juncture. Felicitations and thanks are also due to the Permanent Representative of Austria, for the excellent manner in which he guided the deliberations of the Disarmament Commission last year.

Let me also take this opportunity to extend my delegation's appreciation to the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, and the members of the Secretariat.

The truly historic transformations that have recently swept East-West relations are the harbingers of a new relationship in the international arena. The novel circumstances created in the post-confrontation period have brought into sharp focus the necessity of building a world in which the overriding goal of States should be to build solid foundations on which to maintain international peace and security. Fortunately, the old erroneous approaches no longer hold the appeal they once did and global peace can now be based on justice and equality, as well as on a balance of interests among members of the international community.

Indeed, there is no single panacea to cushion the shocks of the disintegration of the old system, a system which was largely characterized by an unbridled nuclear-arms race between the United States and the former Soviet Union. But let it be stressed that the major task facing the international community today is to ensure a more secure world through steadily diminishing the threats of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. In this context, nuclear-weapon States bear the principal responsibility to accelerate negotiations on the reduction and elimination of such weapons.

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The importance of unilateral and bilateral measures to solidify arms control and disarmament cannot be minimized, particularly since over the past few years the steps taken on the part of nuclear-weapon States to this effect have yielded several important results. However, it is imperative, simultaneously, to strengthen multilateral efforts in this regard. Yet, although the need for such efforts is evident in the post-cold-war era, in reality little has been done to construct the necessary universal instrumentality to realize the propitious goal of eventual general and complete disarmament. Thus, it becomes all the more important that multilateral forums deal with a specific disarmament agenda aimed at articulating the principles and structures, as well as workable plans, to maintain a viable global peace and security.

The primacy of these issues underscores the need for the Disarmament Commission to fulfil its deliberations on the four substantive items at hand in a well-balanced and integrated manner. To this end, I assure you, Sir, of my delegation's full cooperation.

Let me now turn to agenda item 6, "Regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security".

Last year, in our consideration of this item, certain elements were outlined which could contribute to the implementation of its objectives. We are of the view that the tumultuous changes in the world, and specifically in our region, over the past several months can help guide our deliberations this year on this item both conceptually and empirically.

Mindful of its responsibility to enhance security and thereby diminish the incentives to concentrate weapons in our region, my country has assiduously endeavoured to establish and strengthen confidence-building

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measures with its neighbours. Based on this considered view, the underlying principle in our approach towards regional security is to foster multifaceted cooperation among countries of the Persian Gulf region, where countries share deep-rooted bonds of religion, history, culture and commerce. Towards this end, the Islamic Republic of Iran has focused its sustained efforts to expand multidimensional, regional relationships in the political, economic, as well as technical fields. Such efforts have resulted in several practical and extensive steps forward in this context and have enabled the littoral States of this region to forge new structures of cooperation in various areas.

Indeed, it is our firm conviction that after two disastrous wars in this area, in the span of just one decade, such cooperation, together with the full implementation of Security Council resolution 598 (1987), can provide the proper instrumentality to secure viable peace and stability in this vital region.

However, a particularly destabilizing element, which may well significantly preclude the further progress of tranquillity and stability, is the presence of foreign forces in the Persian Gulf region, which makes the trend towards the concentration of sophisticated arms in this area all the more irreversible.

While we are actively participating in the process of developing a well-founded, all-embracing cooperation among Persian Gulf countries, the disintegration of the former Soviet Union and the subsequent emergence of the new States on our northern borders have presented us with tremendous added challenges with respect to ensuring security in all its aspects in the region. Geographical proximity, together with religious, cultural and historical bonds between my country and Central Asia and the Caucuses

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Republics, contribute greatly to my country's concerns vis-à-vis the process of development and transformation in that region.

In fact, this process began with the struggle of people who continue to cast off the burdens and strains of years of Marxist domination. Ever since the beginning of this process, my country has resolutely endeavoured, through a multifaceted approach, to tackle various ensuing issues. First and foremost, our policy is aimed at enabling the new States, particularly our new neighbouring countries, to put the transition period peacefully behind them.

Obviously, the passage through such a transitional period to a more stable condition can be fraught with risks and can even result in unfortunate crises, such as the Nagorno Karabakh crisis. Naturally, the adverse impact of this conflict not only on regional but also on global security highlights the urgency of bringing it to a peaceful settlement. Over the past several weeks, the Islamic Republic of Iran, through concerted mediatory efforts, has attempted to bring about a lasting cease-fire and honourable peace between the conflicting parties. Thus far, as a result of the cooperative attitudes of the sides, as well as other initiatives, including United Nations mediatory efforts, we have been able to contain the scope of the crisis to a significant degree. However, the complexity of the issue demands the continuation of mediatory efforts until a permanent solution to the problem is found.

Another aspect of our approach includes the establishment of a multidimensional economic relationship among States in that region. On a bilateral basis, we have signed 31 letters of understanding and agreements with the former Soviet Republics of Central Asia and the Caucuses, predominantly in the transportation, trade, communications, banking and energy fields. On a regional basis, Iran has worked closely with Pakistan and Turkey

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in bringing six former Soviet republics into the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). This organization, at its summit in Tehran in February, approved the membership of Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan as full members and Kazakhstan as an observer. In addition, a development bank with more than $300 million in assets was established by ECO to provide necessary assistance to the newly independent republics. Furthermore, my country initiated the establishment of an organization of Caspian Sea States. This economic organization, which comprises Iran, Russia, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan, held its first meeting in February of this year in Tehran.

The initiatives, some of which I have highlighted here, are in line with our commitment to promote the cause of peace and security. In sharp contrast to the formation of competing blocs, the driving force behind our approach is our sincere inclination to strengthen security through cooperation. Indeed, our efforts go well beyond the guidelines of confidence-building measures and can definitely contribute to further understanding of various issues related to agenda item 6. I hope that in its consideration of this item, Working Group III of the Commission will also be mindful of the views I have presented today.

As regards agenda item 5, "Process of nuclear disarmament ...", it must be noted that, in spite of the remarkable changes in the international arena, the nuclear arsenals of the great Powers continue to pose serious threats to global security. Indeed, steady progress towards diminishing and eventually eliminating the nuclear syndrome are essential to guarantee sustained progress in other areas of the disarmament agenda.

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In this connection, in addition to the central responsibility which rests with the nuclear-weapon States, there are essential elements and necessary measures which also must be taken into account. Chief among them is to solidify the process of multilateral deliberations on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Equally important is enhancement of the credibility of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and removing its shortcomings. Compliance of nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty with respect to their obligations, including those related to articles IV and VI; cessation of all nuclear tests; conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty; and assurance of the security of non-nuclear-weapons States against the use or threat of uses of nuclear weapons through inclusive, as well as legally binding arrangements - all constitute integral parts of any effort aimed at consolidating the NPT. On another level of concern, it is essential that the industrialized countries parties to the Treaty facilitate the availability of the necessary know-how for the peaceful application of nuclear energy to the developing countries.

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The establishment of zones free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction constitutes yet another important element in consolidating the non-proliferation process. The Islamic Republic of Iran, which in 1974 proposed the establishment of a nuclear-weapon free zone in the Middle East to the General Assembly, remains determined to pursue the realization of this idea. As a major step forward in this regard, we believe that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) verification system should be expanded to all nuclear facilities in our region. Furthermore, similar efforts should be pursued in adjacent regions.

In light of the foregoing, let me briefly comment on the unfounded allegations recently fabricated against our peaceful nuclear programme by certain circles which are pursuing clear and yet unrelated objectives. Needless to say, my country has fully complied with its commitments under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and has never tried to circumvent its obligations. In fact, an IAEA team, headed by the Deputy Director General and Head of the Department of Safeguards, which visited my country last February concluded that our activities were consistent with the peaceful application of nuclear energy and ionizing radiation.

The ever-increasing and unprecedented rapidity of change in international relations is certainly sufficient to explain the importance of our tasks here. The focus of our activity must be to weave together the various threads of theory and reality in a comprehensive and non-discriminatory fashion so as to contribute to the realization of the goal of disarmament, peace and security in the world.

Mr. KHANDOGY (Ukraine) (interpretation from Russian): On behalf of the delegation of Ukraine, I should first of all like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the Bureau on your elections to your responsible posts, and wish you successful and fruitful work.

The year that has passed since our delegation last spoke in the general debate in the Disarmament Commission has seen so many important events that there would be enough of them to fill an entire epoch. A pivotal point for my country was the re-establishment of Ukrainian statehood and the confirmation of Ukraine in the world community as a genuinely independent, sovereign State, autonomously determining its own fate on the basis of the will of all the nations and peoples living there.

I should like at this point to confirm once again Ukraine's loyalty to the purposes and principles of the Charter and to the generally acknowledged norms of international law; our unswerving desire to build a genuinely democratic society; and our readiness to ensure the observance of human rights on the basis of complete respect for the individual and fair treatment of our national minorities.

Of course, the dramatic change that has taken place in the life of my country is not an event that is isolated in time: to a significant degree, it became possible as a result of those extremely profound, truly earth-shaking transformations taking place on our planet, the result of which has been the collapse of history's last empire and the appearance from its ruins of young, independent States and their inclusion in the formation of a new world order which reflects the fact that the world is one and is based on the principles of freedom of choice and of balance between global, regional and national interests.

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At the same time, the realities of the day are such that some new States, including Ukraine, have inherited from a recent military super-Power a whole spectrum of complex political, economic, social and other problems whose solution admits of no delay, the principal of which is the presence on our territory of huge arsenals of nuclear weapons, which are a heavy burden on our economy and are hampering our relations with other countries.

In this connection, I should like once again to affirm Ukraine's unswerving policy towards achieving the status of a non-nuclear State. The President of Ukraine, Leonid Kravchuk, speaking from the General Assembly rostrum, said:

> "Ukraine does not seek to possess nuclear weapons. It intends to become a party to the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear State. This intention is in line with international efforts to reduce and destroy nuclear stockpiles throughout the world. By adopting this stand, Ukraine wishes to promote disarmament and greater trust among nations". (A/46/PV.14, p. 27)

With regard to deployment on Ukraine's territory of particular types of nuclear weapons, our policy is as follows: the presence within the borders of Ukraine of nuclear weapons is a temporary phenomenon. The elimination of those weapons, together with their logistic components, is a question of time.

In accordance with this fundamental position, Ukraine is not repudiating the obligations it has taken upon itself to remove nuclear weapons from its territory with a view to dismantling and destroying them by the previously stated times; i.e., tactical weapons will be destroyed by 1 July 1992 and strategic weapons by the end of 1994.

(Mr. Khandogy, Ukraine)

At the same time, Ukraine attaches special significance to the issues of control over the fates of the nuclear weapons that have been removed. We favour not having the nuclear warheads which are now in Ukraine go to increase the already huge arsenals in Russia, but rather that those weapons should be destroyed under strict control, with participation by international inspectors in the destruction process. I think that this meets the interests of all States without exception, and that Russia will also fulfil its obligations with regard to the destruction of the nuclear weapons that are being removed from the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

With regard to strategic nuclear weapons, we cannot agree to an approach that does not take into account the sovereign rights of Ukraine and its responsibility, along with other States, to destroy such weapons. I should like to point out in this connection that this is not a claim to nuclear status, as certain circles are trying to make out: it is, in our view, a fully understandable aspiration to be master in our own home.

This is also the basis of Ukraine's position with regard to the strategy arms reduction (START) Treaty between the United States and the former USSR. Our assumption is that there is equality between the four States in which the strategic weapons were deployed, and that their sovereignty must be respected. To this end, and in order not to violate the bilateral nature of that agreement, Ukraine has proposed that these four States should become a single, collective party to the Treaty. We are convinced that that decision does not infringe on anybody's rights or interests and promotes the strengthening of the non-proliferation regime, which is something that all of us are striving for.

(Mr. Khandogy, Ukraine)

Negotiations are now under way between the interested parties, and we are sure that there a solution to satisfy everyone will be found. Some countries have negotiated on these issues for years before reaching acceptable agreements. Ukraine has been participating directly in this process for only a few months, and does not intend to drag it out: the START Treaty can be put into force in the near future.

(Mr. Khandogy, Ukraine)

I have allowed myself to talk in some detail about Ukraine's position on certain timely topics of nuclear disarmament because that problem is the focus of our Commission's attention. The overwhelming majority of delegations speaking in the general debate have emphasized that the best guarantee for a peaceful community is not nuclear weapons but rather partnership in the United Nations on the basis of its Charter principles. We sincerely hope that a non-nuclear Ukraine, as we have chosen to become, will be duly seen as a contributor to the strengthening of international security and that our choice of the zero-nuclear option will be followed by others.

In this regard, my delegation would like to commend the decision of France to stop its nuclear testing, and we appeal to all nuclear Powers to follow that example. That decision and Russia's moratorium on nuclear explosions show that the problem of nuclear testing is now approaching a solution acceptable to all. We must now hear from those who were the first to crave the nuclear opium and who, like incurable addicts, are experiencing withdrawal symptoms at the very thought of kicking the destructive habit.

Among the complex of questions related to nuclear disarmament, I should especially like to stress the problem of non-proliferation, which is gradually becoming comprehensive, encompassing all types of weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems and international deliveries of conventional weapons. My delegation believes that one of the central tasks of the United Nations in this area is to establish the necessary conditions for transforming the non-proliferation Treaty into a permanent agreement and to give it a legal status at the Review Conference to be held in 1995. In our view, still timely are the questions related to harmonizing measures to strengthen the guarantees of the security of non-nuclear-States, to expand the current system of guarantees, and to make the non-proliferation regime universal in nature. We

(Mr. Khandogy, Ukraine)

support Sweden's proposal to include these issues on the Commission's agenda at its next session.

The results of the Commission's work last year show the sincere interest of States to seek common approaches to regional disarmament measures within the context of global security. We believe that the majority of States understand that regional measures implemented in the light of the specific characteristics of any given region can effectively help to lessen the risk of local conflicts, strengthen international security and establish preventive measures. In that connection, the delegation of Ukraine would especially like to emphasize that a fundamental principle - I might say a guarantee of success - for any regional efforts, including disarment efforts, would be the equitable participation in those negotiations of all interested States, with no exceptions. Only on that basis is it possible to achieve effective agreements and to verify their effective implementation.

The dynamic of events in Europe, where regional measures in the military sphere have already led to spectacular results, requires corrections in the model and format of the disarmament process at the European level, as well as the immediate involvement in that process of the young, independent States that arose as a result of the break-up of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. We must keep firmly in mind that any attempt to bypass existing realities and to act behind the backs of sovereign States can only lead to undermining regional efforts and even threaten the implementation of agreements already achieved.

Ukraine, as a full-fledged member of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, is becoming a direct participant in the negotiating process on European disarmament problems, and we intend to make a constructive contribution to the solution of the questions under discussion. As is well

(Mr. Khandogy, Ukraine)

known, we are rebuilding our military forces, which are being established on a legal basis in strict keeping with international obligations, including the obligation we have assumed through agreements among the States parties to the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Unfortunately, around this normal, legitimate aspiration of a sovereign State to establish a reliable system for defending its own security and international interests, there have arisen many rumours and some obvious disinformation. In this connection, I should simply like to stress that Ukraine's establishment of its national armed forces specifically entails a radical drop in the number of troops currently deployed on its territory and a reduction in the main types of armaments.

With regard to national naval forces, these are being established exclusively for the purpose of defending and protecting the maritime boundaries of Ukraine on the basis of the Black Sea fleet, which is located within our country's territory. Its forces were built in Ukrainian shipyards with our own steel. In our opinion, this is a pragmatic and balanced approach, if of course the position of acknowledging the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine is upheld. Nor can one ignore the fact that Ukraine made a major contribution to building the Baltic, North Sea and Pacific Ocean fleets of the Commonwealth. Like other States with a right to a fair share of the entire naval potential of the former USSR, Ukraine, bearing in mind contemporary realities, claims only that part of the Black Sea fleet which was assigned to its ports. This is a significantly smaller number of units than the Ukraine contributed to the naval forces of the former Union.

We are convinced that the problem of the Black Sea fleet can be solved on a mutually acceptable basis, not from a position of force but rather at the

(Mr. Khandogy, Ukraine)

negotiating table. Ukraine is ready for such negotiations. By the way, on 16 and 17 April, such negotiations between Russia and Ukraine took place in a friendly atmosphere. They were opened in Kiev and will continue in Odessa.

I have touched on the problem of naval forces also because, in our view, world events urgently demand the inclusion of the naval problem in multilateral disarmament efforts, including at the regional level. We believe that the Commission could be an appropriate forum for seeking mutually acceptable approaches to this problem, primarily in the area of confidence-building measures at sea. The records of our Commission contain extremely interesting ideas and materials in that regard, and in our view it would be useful to give them a fresh look through the prism of those geopolitical changes that have taken place in the world.

The end of confrontation between the two nuclear super-Powers in international affairs is strengthening the unique nature of the United Nations as a universal organization called upon to play a catalytic role in the development of the concept of multilateral disarmament. The practical importance of our work lies in the Commission's potential to keep in mind the broad and multifaceted geographical nature of the disarmament problem, and in its ability to put together major initiatives and stimulate new ideas. Our task is to strengthen the trend towards shifting the discussions on the disarmament problem into their proper channels, ensuring a practical link between "United Nations" disarmament and disarmament in negotiations.

The Commission would be well advised to focus its efforts on those issues that are clearly multilateral in nature and in whose solution the United Nations could play a leading role. These include, for example, the problems of establishing multilateral monitoring mechanisms, selecting and processing objective information on military matters, the non-use of science and

(Mr. Khandogy, Ukraine)

technology for military purposes, including the brain-drain problem related to the production of weapons of mass destruction.

We believe that the current session will help us to identify new areas of possible agreement which will enhance the effectiveness of our work and allow the Commission to determine its own place in the system of multilateral disarmament bodies in accordance with today's realities.

The delegation of Ukraine intends to work constructively with you, Mr. Chairman, and with all interested delegations with a view to promoting successful work in the Commission.

Mr. DJOKIC (Yugoslavia): Let me begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission for this year, and by expressing to you my delegation's best wishes. Allow me also warmly to congratulate the other members of the Bureau and the Chairmen of the Working Groups on their election.

We attach great importance to this year's session of the Disarmament Commission. We expect that the newly acquired effectiveness of the United Nations will have a positive impact on progress on the wide range of disarmament issues as well.

Therefore, we highly appreciate the fact that the recent summit meeting of the Security Council, held last January, attributed considerable importance to the question of disarmament and non-proliferation, acknowledging their crucial contribution to international peace and security.

This year again the same four items figure on our agenda, all meriting our due attention. We consider them to be well balanced.

As regards the first topic - objective information on military matters - we believe that this year we should make the utmost efforts to finalize the work on this agenda item and adopt the recommendation, since this is the third consecutive year that it has been deliberated upon. In that regard, we are of the opinion that last year's text, which you advanced, Mr. Chairman, "Guidelines for objective information on military matters", can serve as a good basis for the negotiation and adoption of the final text. The importance of having this item successfully finalized is all the greater since we are dealing with a very important confidence-building measure that can enhance greater openness and transparency. In the same vein, we welcome the adoption of the General Assembly resolution under which the Register of Conventional

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Arms was established, as yet another significant contribution towards the promotion of openness and transparency. Such measures would create the necessary conditions to ensure better understanding and at least partially resolve some of the differences in the highly sensitive field of disarmament.

This is the second consecutive year in which we are considering three other topics: "Process of nuclear disarmament in the framework of international peace and security, with the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons"; "Regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security"; and "The role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields".

Last year we had thorough and substantive discussions. If we are to have these topics finalized successfully next year, the Yugoslav delegation feels that this year we should start to prepare the groundwork for next year's session. That is of particular importance in regard to the nuclear agenda item, which we believe calls for new endeavours, particularly by nuclear-weapon States. Last year's paper for this agenda item, submitted by former Ambassador Moussa of Egypt, in his capacity as Chairman of Working Group II, contains a number of elements which were frequently raised and deliberated upon in the course of the last session. We might take these elements as guidelines for this year's deliberations, with the aim of having them further worked out.

The regional approach to disarmament is of extreme importance, since it is essential for stability in various regions and has an obvious impact on global stability. It was a timely decision of the Disarmament Commission to include this item on the agenda. A good example in this respect is surely the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), which has contrived a

(Mr. Djokic, Yugoslavia)

specific security system in Europe based on confidence, openness, transparency and cooperation in all spheres. These achievements could not have materialized without the contribution made by neutral and non-aligned countries within the CSCE, particularly at a time dominated by bloc confrontation in international relations. We consider that the CSCE process could serve as a useful example for some other regions, but always bearing in mind the specific features of every region. The paper presented by Ambassador Wisnumurti of Indonesia last year with regard to this agenda item is well structured and balanced, and it would be advantageous if we continued to examine the question in the light of this proposal.

The last item on our agenda, science and technology for disarmament, is forward-looking and also deserves our full attention. We believe that four aspects or sub-items underlined in the report of Working Group IV could ensure in-depth and efficient deliberation on the matter.

Finally, I would like to emphasize the need to improve the efficiency of the Commission's work and thus of the overall process of disarmament.

Major breakthroughs made in the field of bilateral disarmament between the United States of America and the former Soviet Union, now the Russian Federation, the strengthening of the non-proliferation system and so on also require fresh efforts for the strengthening of multilateralism in disarmament.

The successful finalization of the work concerning our first agenda item, as well as the continuation of our deliberations on the other three items, will make it clear that we were right to adopt General Assembly resolution 44/119 C, which included an annex entitled "Ways and Means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission".

The CHAIRMAN: In calling on the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, I recall that yesterday I had the pleasure of recognizing in our midst the representatives of the two Koreas, who are attending a session of the Disarmament Commission for the first time.

Mr. PAK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to extend to you my delegation's congratulations on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Disarmament Commission for the 1992 session. Your personal dynamism and diplomatic skill will undoubtedly make a positive contribution to ensuring the success of our deliberations.

May I also express my felicitations to the other members of the Bureau.

The current session of the Disarmament Commission is being held at a time when a tremendous change is taking place in the international situation and when, more than ever before, close attention is being focussed by the world's peace-loving countries and peoples on the issues of disarmament. The world witnesses military confrontation being eased and disarmament making progress in some regions. However, these changes are only the beginning, and the issue of disarmament still remains a priority in securing international peace and security.

The items on the agenda of the current session reflect the issues which need to be urgently solved in the field of disarmament. My delegation attaches particular attention to selected items on the agenda.

The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which regards independence, peace and friendship as the basic ideals of its foreign policy, attaches particular importance to disarmament and, in particular, to nuclear disarmament, and is making strenuous efforts for its realization.

(Mr. Pak, Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

The issue of nuclear disarmament is a matter of primary concern for the non-nuclear States in the field of arms control and disarmament. A large number of non-nuclear States have acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty for the purpose of being guaranteed against the threat of nuclear weapons.

The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which consistently pursues an anti-nuclear and peace policy, is making every possible effort to halt the nuclear armaments race and eliminate the threat of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Pak, Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

Following its signature of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in December 1985, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea made a proposal to turn the Korean peninsula into a nuclear-free and peace zone and exerted tireless efforts to achieve the implementation of the proposal.

When it adhered to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Government of our Republic had hoped that the United States, a nuclear-weapons State, would renounce its nuclear threat to our country, a non-nuclear State, and would discharge its legal obligation under the Treaty. Despite the perseverance of our efforts, the United States continued shipping nuclear weapons into south Korea, increased the nuclear threat to us and exerted against us the pressure of unilateral nuclear inspection, misleading world opinion by spreading false rumours about the so-called development of nuclear weapons by us. This unilateral pressure was an insult to our pride which we could not bear.

The Government of our Republic, which holds independence to be dearer than life, insisted that if the nuclear inspection problem was to be settled fairly, the United States must withdraw all the nuclear weapons from south Korea, eliminate the nuclear threat to us and commit itself to a legal guarantee of security for us, and there must be simultaneous inspection of the United States nuclear weapons and bases in south Korea.

Last year the United States published a plan for the withdrawal of tactical nuclear weapons, thus admitting - though indirectly - the presence of United States nuclear weapons in south Korea, and it said it would withdraw its nuclear weapon from south Korea. With the removal of the main stumbling block in the way of our signing the nuclear safeguards agreement, preconditions were created for the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

(Mr. Pak, Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

On 9 April last, the third session of the Ninth Supreme People's Assembly of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea ratified the nuclear safeguards agreement concluded between our Republic and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It is my great honour to declare once again the stand of the Government of our Republic that it will accept nuclear inspection without delay, in accordance with the working procedures agreed upon with IAEA.

At the end of last year, the Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula was adopted, and the Joint Nuclear Control Commission between the north and the south of Korea was established. The Commission has begun its work. We hope that the authorities of the United States and south Korea will approach with goodwill the implementation of the Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

If the nuclear facilities in the north and the United States nuclear bases in south Korea are open to comprehensive inspection and the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula is respected and guaranteed by the nuclear States, including the United States, the Korean peninsula will be converted into a nuclear-free zone, thereby making a remarkable contribution to the process of nuclear disarmament in general.

The item on regional approaches to disarmament within the context of global security has growing relevance today. Regional measures can be effective in lessening the risk of local conflicts and promoting progress in the general process of arms reduction and disarmament. We believe that the Disarmament Commission must consider all aspects of the regional approach to arms limitation and reduction and to foreign military presences. Regional measures should be implemented with due regard for the specific characteristics of each region.

(Mr. Pak, Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

Against the background of the specific characteristics of the Korean peninsula, the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea put forward in May 1990 a comprehensive disarmament proposal on easing the tension on the Korean peninsula and creating a peaceful climate for national reunification. That disarmament proposal contained the following points, among others: the north and the south should reduce their armed forces by stages; the qualitative military improvement should be stopped by the north and the south; the north and the south should transmit information to each other on the process of disarmament, and there should be verification of this; in order to convert the Korean peninsula into a nuclear-free zone, the north and the south should make joint efforts to remove all the nuclear weapons deployed in south Korea; nuclear weapons should not be produced or purchased; foreign planes and warships loaded with nuclear weapons should be banned from entering or passing through Korea; and joint efforts should be made by the north and the south to get all foreign troops withdrawn from the Korean peninsula.

The Agreement on Reconciliation, Non-aggression and Cooperation and Exchange which was adopted between the north and the south came into force in February this year. The adoption of this north-south agreement has led to an opening of the way towards the removal of the threat of thermonuclear war and the installation of lasting peace in the Korean peninsula. Such a move towards peace on the Korean peninsula will make a significant contribution to world peace and security.

My delegation highly appreciates the Chairman's papers of last year's session of the Disarmament Commission as the basic documents worthy of consideration at this session - although there are a few differences in

(Mr. Pak, Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

views. In this regard, I should like to stress that the following points should be given attention: confidence in disarmament cannot be created so long as the nuclear threat continues to be made against the non-nuclear States, and, accordingly, guidelines should be drawn up for the provision of a legal guarantee that the nuclear States will not threaten the non-nuclear States with nuclear weapons; the arms race should be halted in order that confidence in disarmament can be created at the regional level. It is also my view that, subsequently, particular attention should be paid to preventing an arms build-up.

In conclusion, my delegation believes that the current session of the Disarmament Commission will submit productive recommendations to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session, thus contributing to the promotion of the disarmament process.

Mr. VALENCIA (Ecuador) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation welcomes your election, Sir, as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission at this substantive session. Like other delegations, that of Ecuador is fully confident that your professional skills ensure that the Commissions' work will be fruitful. I take pleasure in reaffirming the spirit of full cooperation in which the delegation of Ecuador has always worked and will continue to work with the Chairmen of the Commission.

I should like to take this opportunity to express once again Ecuador's gratitude to Ambassador Peter Hohenfellner for the outstanding role he played as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission last year. We also wish to welcome the new Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky.

(Mr. Valencia, Ecuador)

The fact that the Commission is once again meeting further highlights two already very striking realities. First, important issues relating to disarmament are still at the discussion stage and call for the constant attention of the international community with a view to clarifying concepts, reconciling views and arriving at agreements which can later come into effect. Secondly, the continued work of the Commission also underscores the unflagging interest of the international community in the discussion of matters which, despite their recognized complexity, call for undivided attention and global action.

My delegation has followed with interest the progress that has been made on the issue of objective information on military matters. The General Assembly's adoption in its resolution 46/36 L of a scheme to monitor international arms transfers is another factor which will definitely have to be taken into account when we come to discuss the document of the Chairman of the Working Group on the item. It is fitting to recall the importance of this issue, which was expressly recognized at the 31 January meeting of the Security Council at the Head of State level. In this respect, my country considers it extremely important for us to take into account the result of the work of the Panel of Governmental Experts which was established by the General Assembly. In so doing, we shall ensure that the implementation of the system will gain in effectiveness and more appropriately fulfil the purposes for which it is designed.

Ecuador hopes that this is the last year the Disarmament Commission will have on its agenda the question of objective information on military matters and that consensus can be reached at this session on a final document.

(Mr. Valencia, Ecuador)

The issue of regional approach to disarmament is of particular importance to the developing countries. While recognizing in this connection the undeniable influence that global strategic factors and universal disarmament have on regional disarmament processes, Ecuador reaffirms its conviction that certain aspects of regional disarmament can be addressed independently. Regional arms control or disarmament processes should not be held up because of external reasons, at least in certain areas, such as, for example, the adoption of confidence-building measures at the regional, subregional and bilateral levels, the regulation or control of the acquisition of certain types of weapons, mutually agreed reductions of military personnel and the promotion of zones free of certain types of weapons.

In practice, it is the sovereign option of each country to gauge the degree of influence that extraneous factors have on the types and quantities of weapons deployed in its region and how those types and quantities may be reduced if those factors are modified in order to permit this. However, outside influences may vary in intensity or manifest themselves in various ways in different regions of the world. Thus, although a regional disarmament mechanism that fails to take into consideration the global disarmament process cannot be imposed in all regions, it would also be inappropriate to stop promoting disarmament in certain regions where global strategic factors are of minor consequence.

In the same area of regional disarmament, my country believes that careful attention should be given to political or other motives - such as ethnic or national rivalries - which promote the existence of high levels of armaments in a given region. Conflicts between States or societies are the

(Mr. Valencia, Ecuador)

underlying causes of arms races and costly investments in military procurement. Until the ultimate cause for the accumulation of armaments is eliminated, the tendency towards increasingly large stockpiles can be curbed only by the economic limitations of the customers in the arms market.

In the area of nuclear disarmament there have been some heartening signs after decades of a continued arms race. The participation of the United Nations in the process of reducing nuclear weapons has been indirect because the protagonists have preferred to arrive at arrangements through bilateral channels. This does not diminish the role played by the Organization in alerting public opinion to the dangers of nuclear weapons and in encouraging Governments involved in the problem to take steps with a view to finding a solution.

At the same time, action by international forums has indeed been effective when it has been focused on the negotiation of instruments designed to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Hence it is understandable that the Commission's Working Group on nuclear disarmament should have concentrated on discussing principles and theoretical scenarios rather than on proposing specific measures - even though such measures might never be implemented anyway. We believe that this is the conclusion the Chairman of the Working Group arrived at last year in his working paper - after arduous efforts to which my delegation pays tribute. Ecuador considers that, in order to make headway on the nuclear item, we should bear in mind the practical goals the Working Group is pursuing with the discussion of the item, rather than engaging in the exercise of repeating already very well-known positions or in the proliferation of proposals.

Mr. SADER (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): Allow me first to convey to you, Sir, my delegation's warm congratulations on your assumption of the post of Chairman of this substantive session of the Disarmament Commission. We are confident that under your guidance the Commission will achieve the specific targets set for it this year. At the same time, we congratulate Ambassador Hohenfellner of Austria for his excellent work last year.

I should also like to take the opportunity to convey our congratulations to Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky on his appointment as Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

This session of the Commission is taking place, as most of the previous speakers have noted, in a new, constantly evolving international context, one which is radically different from the previous situation. These are propitious times for collective thinking about international security, and in particular about disarmament, which is precisely the mandate we have in the Commission.

With this in mind, one can expect that there are increased possibilities for the guidelines and recommendations of the Commission to be put into practice further down the line.

Uruguay remains convinced of the usefulness of this collective thinking with regard to disarmament, especially at this historic moment in time, and the validity of a multilateral disarmament mechanism.

Therefore, and in view of the Commission's singular decision-making mechanism, my delegation believes that we should do our utmost to achieve the greatest possible number of decisions on all agenda items. Of course, achieving consensus does not mean that the significant differences of perception still persisting about international security and disarmament will

(Mr. Sader, Uruguay)

be ironed out completely, or that certain items will be given precedence over others. What is required is an exercise of realism and productivity, while recognizing existing limitations and gradually overcoming them.

With regard to the item on objective information on military matters, we believe that this is a fundamental confidence-building measure and that we have a good basis for our work in the text of the guidelines suggested by the Chairman of Working Group I last year, which lays down an appropriate basis in terms of objectives, principles, scope and mechanism.

At the same time, General Assembly resolution 46/36 L, on transparency in armaments, is an important development: in paragraphs 14 it provides expressly for the future of the results of the work of Working Group I - that is, to provide to the Conference on Disarmament all relevant information to be taken into account by the Conference when it considers interrelated aspects of arms build-up, with a view to elaborating "practical means to increase openness and transparency."

(Mr. Sader, Uruguay)

With respect to the agenda item of Working Group II, "Process of nuclear disarmament in the framework of international peace and security, with the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons", the issues are extremely important and complex and, in the course of the last year, noteworthy events have taken place on many of the points involved. This is particularly true with respect to the bilateral agreements between the United States and the former Soviet Union, now Russia, and the unilateral measures announced by both nuclear Powers at the beginning of the year, which lead us to be optimistic about deeper cuts in arms levels in the near future.

With respect to nuclear non-proliferation, an issue which occupies an increasingly significant place on the agenda of the question of international security, a growing number of countries have decided to adhere to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), apparently bringing the objective of universality within reach. Of course, the fact that the Treaty is becoming universal is not, in itself, a sufficient guarantee for the effectiveness of the system, which requires strengthening the implementation safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). In this respect, my Government welcomes the steps taken by that Agency.

In connection with non-proliferation, Uruguay attaches particular importance to nuclear-weapon-free zones, a concept which, in our view, has not lost any of its validity in the current international situation. In this respect, in our Latin American region, coinciding with the twenty-fifth anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, positive developments have taken place with respect to the full validity of the nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean. The announcements made by Argentina, Brazil, Chile and France are very important signs of the revitalization of the

(Mr. Sader, Uruguay)

Tlatelolco system and of the unanimous understanding of its significance for the future of our region and its contribution to global peace and security.

Finally, the recent announcement by France concerning the establishment of a unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing in 1992 offers an extremely important contribution and, at the same time, an additional step in the right direction towards the total cessation of nuclear tests.

The work of the Commission at the last session and of the First Committee in recent years clearly indicates the importance of regional disarmament as a complement to global efforts.

In recent years, a number of efforts have been undertaken in various regions. Those endeavours, which have been successful indeed, have called for significant negotiations on the bilateral level and within the framework of regional organizations and the United Nations. It is in the light of these developments that my delegation believes that this issue, which is far from having been exhausted, should be given priority treatment by giving special attention to the particular nature of each region.

On the basis of these considerations, my delegation believes that the paper produced by the Chairman of Working Group III last year presents an appropriate approach to the item and is a good basis of discussion for this year.

Last year Working Group IV produced a paper on "The role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields", a productive and promising "brainstorming" exercise, which identified four thematic areas in which there was room for progress. That is noteworthy, especially in the light of the difficulties inherent in so complex a subject as this, which only now, for the first time, is being taken up in systematic fashion at the United Nations.

(Mr. Sader, Uruguay)

I should like to mention two areas in particular: first, the use of science and technology for disarmament purposes, with particular emphasis on verification and the possibilities for converting military industries to civilian purposes, as well as the dismantling of weapons of mass destruction; secondly, the transfer of advanced technology with potential military applications, an extremely sensitive issue and a key one in the field of the non-proliferation of destabilizing weapons with a high destructive potential, which has, at the same time, a clear impact on economic and social development.

Of utmost importance in that regard was the adoption of resolution 46/38 D, on the transfer of high technology with military applications, and resolution 46/36 L, on transparency in armaments, operative paragraph 13 of which requests the Conference on Disarmament to address the matter of transparency related to the tranfer of sensitive technology.

This is a subject on which we need to establish a balance that will safeguard security and neither hinder the free circulation of goods and services, nor interfere with scientific research or States' legitimate defence needs. We therefore reaffirm our support for the proposal of Argentina and Brazil on the study of non-discriminatory international guidelines with a view to possible regulation of such transfers, which might perhaps be brought to fruition in the Conference on Disarmament.

The CHAIRMAN: The last speaker on the list this morning is the representative of Lithuania, who will speak on behalf of three Baltic States. This obviously gives me the opportunity to welcome Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. I am certain that we shall greatly benefit from their cooperation and participation in the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

Mr. GURECKAS (Lithuania): Mr. Chairman, I should like to thank you for your kind words of welcome to our countries and our delegations.

Sir, speaking on behalf of the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia and my own country, Lithuania, I have the honour to congratulate you on your election to the important office of Chairman of the 1992 session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. I should like also to congratulate the Secretariat and the Chairmen of the four Working Groups. As this is the first time that the three delegations of the Baltic countries participate in the work of the Commission, I wish to assure you of our full cooperation and support.

The momentous events of the last year - the end of the cold war, the collapse and dissolution of the Soviet Union - bring unprecedented opportunities and challenges to the United Nations and to the international community as a whole, for radical reductions in troops and armaments to the lowest level consistent with the minimum requirements for the external and internal security of States.

The Baltic States, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, are interested in achieving substantial progress in all four subjects of this Commission's agenda. We consider the newly established universal Register for international trade in heavy armaments as an important instrument for transparency which promotes greater confidence among States. We would hope that it might be possible to take the next step and to establish a general register of the existing troops and armaments, also indicating their areas of deployment.

(Mr. Gureckas, Lithuania)

On the subject of nuclear disarmament, on 16 March 1992, the Council of the Baltic States, meeting at the level of the Heads of State of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, issued a statement calling for the removal of nuclear weapons from the Baltic Sea region and for the recognition of that region as a nuclear-free zone. This could be a step in the gradual general demilitarization of the Baltic Sea region.

(Mr. Gureckas, Lithuania)

To a large extent, general disarmament would result from a series of comprehensive regional disarmament measures. The Baltic States are in favour of such a comprehensive disarmament programme in their geographic area. However, before any realistic disarmament measures can be contemplated in the Baltic area, the troops of the former Soviet Union must be removed from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. These forces are a relic of the cold war. Their continued deployment in our countries without our consent violates our sovereignty and constitutes a danger to the stability and security of our region.

Finally, it is important for science and technology to be fully utilized for disarmament purposes: they can provide reliable means of verification of agreed disarmament measures, and help in conversion of military resources to civilian uses.

Our delegations are eager to contribute their efforts to the work of the Disarmament Commission, and we hope that our concerns will be addressed in its deliberations.

The CHAIRMAN: We have now exhausted our list of speakers for this morning. This afternoon, we have 17 speakers on on our list, so I would reiterate my humble but very firm request for representatives to show up at the time indicated: as I have already said, the sooner we begin, the sooner we may end our discussions this afternoon.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.